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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 27 October 2014 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to urgently draw your attention, yet again, to the dangerously escalating tensions in Occupied East Jerusalem, the capital of the State of Palestine. The illegal policies and the constant provocations and incitement by Israel, the occupying Power, and its settlers and other extremists against the Palestinian people, their land and their holy places are exacerbating already high tensions, risking further turmoil and destabilization of the extremely fragile situation on the ground, as reflected in the growing number of protests and clashes, particularly in Occupied East Jerusalem.

In grave breach of international law and in total contempt of the repeated international demands for cessation, Israel, the occupying Power, continues its illegal settlement campaign, which is clearly aimed at entrenching its illegitimate control over the Palestinian land it has belligerently occupied since 1967 and systematically destroying the two-State solution. This relentless colonization campaign has been most flagrant in Occupied East Jerusalem, with continued seizure of Palestinian properties, violent attacks on Palestinian civilians, demolition of Palestinian homes, forced displacement of Palestinian residents of the City, and provocative declarations regarding the construction of settlements.

In this regard, in a blatant act of reprisal for the events of the previous week, the Israeli Government has announced a decision to construct another 1,000 units in the illegal settlements of "Har Homa" (Jabal Abu Ghneim) in the south of Occupied East Jerusalem and "Ramat Shlomo" in the north of Occupied East Jerusalem. This announcement was preceded by the seizure last week of 35 Palestinian homes by extremist, State-sponsored settlers in the Silwan neighbourhood of the City, in yet another criminal act of property confiscation and forced displacement of Palestinian families, who are suffering constant pressure, violence, discrimination and racism in the City, as the brutality and malice of Israeli settlers and extremists continues to rise.

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We firmly condemn all of these actions and illegitimate plans, which coincide with the provocative and condemnable proposed Israeli legislation to change the status quo over the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. In this regard, we caution of the extreme dangers of the unabated Israeli provocations and incitement, including by Israeli officials and other extremists and including attacks on innocent Palestinian worshippers, at Al-Haram Al-Sharif, which houses the holy Al-Aqsa Mosque and Qubbat Al-Sakhra (Dome of the Rock), and any attempts to alter the long-standing status quo at this Holy Site. We stress that these actions are inflaming an already volatile situation and threaten to further upset the religious sensitivities in the City and ignite another cycle of violence.

We appeal to the international community, including the Security Council, to demand that Israel, the occupying Power, rescind its plans and cease forthwith all of its illegal settlement activities and all other provocations and incitement throughout the Palestinian land, including in Occupied East Jerusalem. We recall, in this regard, the clear determination by the Security Council, including in its resolutions 446 (1979), 452 (1979), 465 (1980) and 478 (1980), of the illegality of Israel's policies and measures aimed at altering the demographic composition, character and status of the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

Moreover, we recall the Council's determination that all such measures by Israel, the occupying Power, "to alter the character and status of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and in particular the recent 'basic law' on Jerusalem, are null and void and must be rescinded forthwith". The Security Council must act seriously to uphold its resolutions, including by undertaking action to ensure respect by Israel, the occupying Power, for those resolutions and compliance with all of its obligations thereunder and in accordance with the relevant provisions of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention. In this regard, we call upon the Security Council to immediately convene an emergency meeting to address the crisis situation in Occupied East Jerusalem resulting from all of the above-mentioned illegal Israeli policies and measures, with a view to compelling Israel to cease immediately and completely its violations and to commit to the path of peace that it has clearly and recklessly abandoned.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 525 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 20 October 2014 (A/ES-10/661-S/2014/748) constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed against the Palestinian people. Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations